

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING
ROOM 113
TUESDAY, AUGUST 3, 1999
10:00 A.M.**

Commissioners Present: Kathy Campbell, Chair
Bernie Heier
Larry Hudkins
Linda Steinman
Bob Workman

Others Present: Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer
Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer
Bruce Bailey, Design Associates of Lincoln
Charles Willnerd, Agricultural Society
Steve Masters, Public Works
Roger Figard, Public Works
Nick McElvain, Public Works
Melissa Koci, County Clerk's Office

AGENDA ITEM

1 APPROVAL OF STAFF MEETING MINUTES OF JULY 29, 1999

This item was deferred until August 5, 1999.

2 ADDITION TO AGENDA

- a. Emergency Executive Session - Diane Staab, Deputy County Attorney

3 BUDGET UPDATE - Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer

EVENT CENTER UPDATE

Campbell reported there have been some discussions with regards to sewer and water for the new Event Center between the Public Works Department and the Ag Society. She indicated the County Board's role in the new Event Center has been one of facilitation of discussion, but the Ag Society is a political subdivision and it will make the final negotiation and agreement with Public Works.

Steve Masters, Public Works, appeared and indicated there are two issues related to water and waste water and he said it is the City's policy that the land for the Event Center would have to be annexed before Public Works can provide water and sewer to the area. He said there is a finished water transmission line that runs water from the northeast pump station out by Novartis and then to Vine Street and he noted it is important that they don't make connections directly to that pipe. Masters said at first they were thinking they needed to run a 16" main in Havelock east to 84th and then south along the east side of 84th Street.

Nick McElvain, Public Works, appeared and said it is actually a 48" pipe that leaves the northeast pump station as a 54" but it goes down 84th Street to that location and becomes a 48". He reported the main is a transmission main, which customers are not hooked up to, however, a couple of customers are hooked up to the transmission main, which are Novartis and Good Life Tours. He said 2 to 2 ½ ago years when work was being done at the northeast pump station the pipe needed to be taken down and most people were without water for one month. McElvain stated Good Life Tours got bottled water and porta potties and Novartis brought in portable pumps and had to depressurize the water or pump it because it was out of service. He said the goal is to provide continuous service to the facility, not intermittent service. McElvain noted there is sub at Havelock of a 16" main and when a person gets south of the bike path, in what is equivalent of Fremont Street, there is a 36" that goes west through the Mahoney Park area. He said there is a valve at the 36" so the goal is to build a main from Havelock to the equivalent of what is Fremont Street.

Masters reported there is an opportunity through the annexation of the property to provide water with a looped water main, and Public Works would be interested in subsidizing a portion of the cost. He said the total project cost for water will be around \$300,000 with an even split between the City of Lincoln and the Assessment District, which would include \$75,000 from the University Foundation and \$75,000 from the Ag Society.

Campbell indicated the Ag Society will be meeting with the University on August 20, 1999.

Masters reported the interior sewer will be constructed under the Agricultural Society's supervision. He also said there was a feature in the annexation agreement to charge back an acreage cost to connect, which might be \$1,500 per acre and there are 40 acres, which might not all have to be annexed.

Hudkins asked the Ag Society if there will be other costs other than the \$1,500 an acre access to get on the City sewer system.

Masters said other than the construction of Lancaster County's local system there wouldn't be any extra costs.

Bailey indicated they are currently doing a decelerating lane and a widen entry so that they can go to the 4-lane control and he is working with the County Engineer regarding paving on Havelock Avenue.

Hudkins reported the University property that is being discussed is actually titled University of Nebraska Foundation and Jim Abel is the President.

AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Kroeker appeared and distributed documentation regarding the budget for the Agricultural Society (Exhibit 2). He noted in the Operating Budget there is some Debt Service which includes loan payments, interest payments and \$255,000 of improvements on real property and he wanted some clarification.

Charles Willnerd, Agricultural Society, appeared and said because of the nature of the capital improvement none of the monies can be used for real estate. He said when the Ag Society closed on the first 40 acres for the Event Center there was a bridge loan taken out which eventually will be converted to a USDA Rural Development Loan. It will be split by the USDA and the local banking institution. Willnerd indicated the monies are coming from the fund raising campaign for the Debt Service.

Hudkins asked how long the bridge loan is for.

Willnerd indicated 60 to 90 days with the loan maturing the 15th of August and he noted he also spoke with USDA who would like to close the loan on August 12th. He said the loan is a 40-year loan at a very reasonable interest rate and the Ag Society may retain some of the funds for emergency operating funds to keep in reserve.

Campbell asked Kroeker if the loan is outside the regular lid.

Kroeker indicated the loan is funded by contributions and part of it is noted in the Sponsorship/Donation general fund for \$500,000 budgeted for the coming year. He asked if the \$265,264 in the Capital Improvements Fund under Improvements on Real Property is also part of the leftover funds.

Willnerd said he wasn't sure what the costs in Improvements on Real Property were for, but indicated there are certain engineering costs, surveying costs, grading and improvement that are relative strictly to the land and the costs are included in the figure.

Kroeker asked if the new manager is in the operating budget and if so where.

Willnerd stated it will come out of Personnel Costs.

Campbell indicated she received a letter from Bruce Bailey which outlined the Phase I Construction and Site Work. She also noted the County Board asked for an itemization of the capital improvements that have been requested in the 99/2000 budget.

Bailey briefly discussed the following specific activities and estimated costs for the new Lancaster Event Center:

- 7 **Phase I Construction** - including 2 stalling barns and secondary pavilion that includes a static display and exhibit building. Estimated cost \$5,982,000
- 7 **Site Work** - Including grading, drainage, storm water detention, flood control and construction survey at an estimated cost of \$435,000

The subtotal for the Phase I Construction project is \$6,417,000.

- 7 **Murdock Trail Head** - includes a shelter, water station and public restrooms located between the Event Center and the Murdock Trail at an estimated cost of \$27,500.
- 7 **Recreational Vehicle Hookups** - located along the easterly boundary of the site to accommodate Event Center patrons and other organizations visiting Lancaster County. Estimated cost \$45,000.
- 7 **Youth Building** - containing 16,000 square feet available for rent to youth club events at an estimated cost of \$395,000.
- 7 **Fencing** - located along the perimeter of the site to control site access to insure security for patrons and Event Center improvements. Estimated cost of \$53,000.
- 7 **Water Main** - construction of a 16" public water main along the 84th Street frontage of the Event Center. Estimated cost is \$75,000.
- 7 **Water and Fire Protection** - including a "looped" water supply system to provide fire hydrant spacing around the Event Center in compliance with hydrant spacing recommended by the City of Lincoln. Estimated cost is \$114,000.
- 7 **Street Improvement** - includes construction of a northbound right turn deceleration lane in 84th Street and reconstruction of the 84th Street access. Estimated cost is \$35,000.

The subtotal for the FY1999/2000 requests is \$744,500

Willnerd indicated he received a good response back on the bids for the first phase for the site preparation and the box culverts that have to be installed and he said he would be meeting within the next couple of days to discuss the bids and get the contractor's approved.

Campbell asked Bailey if the \$6,417,000 is what is projected for this year.

Bailey indicated the \$6,417,000 covers the cost of Phase I and all the site work, and not the itemized list of capital improvements.

Campbell said that from the two tax levies along with interests to date, \$7,075,000 is available for construction.

Bailey also indicated the fund raising has begun and there is not a large pavilion being built at this time. With the closing of Aksarben, he is beginning to receive many requests on events coming up. Bailey said his goal is to get the 3rd stalling barn and work towards getting money for the main pavilion.

Workman reported the County Board received a letter from the State Auditor's Office indicating to him that there is \$17 million in the Railroad Transportation Safety District Fund and his thoughts were to consider reducing the assessment to RTSD for one year in response to the letter. He read a motion that was previously approved at a County Board meeting which said the County Board would "intend to reduce the Railroad Transportation Safety District's levy for a one year period from 2.6 to 2.0 cents, contingent upon information that the County Board will receive during the next month." Workman said that .6 of a cent amounts to around \$750,000 and there are also a couple new items on the table which are under consideration. He asked if the \$750,000 does not go to the Ag Society, will it delay the wish list.

Willnerd said it will depend on how and when the other monies come in as to when some of the other projects will be done.

RAILROAD TRANSPORTATION SAFETY DISTRICT

Roger Figard, Public Works, appeared and indicated the baseball complex budget has \$1,250,000 in it from the RTSD and he is anticipating paying for the railroad right-of-way, which is \$250,000.

Hudkins asked if there have been any negotiations with the railroad going on or do they have other properties or crossings that may need work and could be done in exchange.

Steinman earlier submitted documentation to each Board member regarding how the State accumulates funds, especially for railroad crossings. She said one of the projects that the State set aside money for is the Antelope Valley Project in Lincoln and they have over \$9 million in other projects. She said if it is okay for the State to set aside monies, than Lancaster County should be able to.

Campbell suggested sending a copy of the report to Kate Witek, State Auditor. She said there were some questions regarding what was in RTSD for Antelope Valley and what grade crossing would it take care of.

Figard said Antelope Valley is a very large project that is taking funding from the City, Railroad Transportation Safety District, Federal and State and it will eliminate crossings at 14th Street on the Burlington Northern corner, 17th Street in front of the south entrance to the Fairgrounds, 33rd Street and 35th and Adams Street.

Hudkins questioned the proposal when 33rd Street and 35th Street will be closed and how the traffic will get across Cornhusker.

Figard indicated the revised master plan shows a 2 or 3 lane underpass at 33rd Street, which will provide access to businesses. He also said there will be an underpass at 29th Street where Adams and Huntington connect to.

Hudkins expressed his concerns regarding an at-grade intersection that is proposed at 29th Street and Cornhusker Hwy.

Workman asked if the \$1.2 million for the baseball complex will be deducted from the Antelope Valley Projected Expenditures in the future.

Figard said he would like to take some time to analyze the budget and send to the Board prior to the September meeting, his suggestions on how the money will be put into the budget.

2 ADDITION TO THE AGENDA

- a. Emergency Executive Session - Pending Litigation, Diane Staab, County Attorney's Office

MOTION: Steinman moved and Heier seconded to add an Emergency Executive Session for Pending Litigation to the agenda. On call Workman, Hudkins, Steinman and Heier voted aye. Motion carried.

MOTION: Hudkins moved and Heier seconded to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of litigation at 11:16 a.m. On call Workman, Hudkins, Heier, Steinman and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

MOTION: Hudkins moved and Heier seconded to exit Executive Session at 11:23 a.m. On call Steinman, Workman, Heier, Hudkins and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

RURAL FIRE DISTRICTS

Kroeker appeared and submitted documentation regarding the budget for the Agricultural Society, Railroad Transportation Safety District, Rural Library and the Fire Districts (Exhibit 3). He said the Agricultural Society is requesting \$793,256; RTSD is requesting .026148, but it needed to be lowered to .026 because they can't go over that rate. In regards to the Public Building Commission, their budget is outside the \$0.15 because it is for Debt Service and the Rural Library is .024. Kroeker said with all those amounts calculated, it leaves the Fire Districts with .098346 and last year they received .096489, which is a difference of around \$200,000.

Campbell noted Lancaster County has already raised \$7 million for the Ag Society.

Kroeker said using the Assessor's estimated values, which went up almost 18% from last year to this year. The highest fire district rate excluding debt service is Malcolm, with a rate of .095006.

Campbell suggested leaving the .096489 for the Fire Districts and giving the taxpayer a break.

Hudkins suggested giving the difference from the maximum allowed to the fire districts, which is .096489, and what is budgeted for FY00, which is .098346, to the Ag Society.

Steinman asked Kroeker if the levy is set at .096 and the Fire Districts budget doesn't reflect that they need to levy that final amount, what will happen to the difference.

Kroeker said the taxpayer will get a break.

Workman agreed with Hudkins about giving the extra monies to the Ag Society.

Steinman said if Lancaster County has a good opportunity to give money back to the taxpayer they should.

Kroeker indicated the resolution will not be prepared until the end of the month, but a motion needs to be made to give the .0018 to the Ag Society Capital Fund or any excess monies over the .096489.

MOTION: Steinman moved and Workman seconded to fund the Ag Society, RTSP, Public Building Commission, Rural Library and Fire Districts to the rate allowable under the levy holding the Fire Districts to .096489, which does not include the extra monies allowed for the Ag Society. On call Steinman, Heier, Workman, Hudkins and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

MOTION: Hudkins moved to amend the motion and do the additional funding for the Ag Society with the difference between .096489 and the full \$0.15. There was no second.

MOTION: Workman moved and Heier seconded to approve the difference between .096489 allocated to Fire Districts and the amount of the .15 cents remaining after levying for the Ag Society operating budget, the .026 cents levy for the RTSD and the Rural Library levy when the actual valuation is known. On call Hudkins, Heier, Workman voted aye. Motion carried. Steinman and Campbell voted no. Motion carried.

At the direction of the Chair, the meeting was adjourned.

Bruce Medcalf
Lancaster County Clerk